

## How can one know for sure that there is a God?

The evidence for the existence of God is so overwhelming that the Psalmist exclaims, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no god*" [Psalm 14:1; 53:1]. The writer of Proverbs says, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction*" [Proverbs 1:7]. The New Testament says "...*even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind*" [Romans 1:28]. Also the book of Romans says, "*For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen...even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*" [Romans 1:20].

Such strong language as this in the Word of God surely implies that there is an abundance of undeniable evidence that God exists. Why, then, do so many intelligent people, even brilliant scientists, profess to be atheists? How is it that an ideology squarely founded on atheism, as is communism, can conquer half the world in one generation in the most enlightened and scientific age in history? Even in "*Christian*" countries such as the United States, a sort of practical atheism has gained almost complete control of the schools, the courts, the communications media, and the legislatures. The doctrine of religious freedom has been corrupted into freedom *from* religion in such institutions, and God is expelled and rejected just as if He did not exist at all.

This is an amazing state of affairs - that God, whose existence and supreme importance is abundantly evident and undeniably real, could be so widely denied and ignored. It is plain that factual evidence alone cannot bring acceptance in minds which are set against believing it.

The element of faith - *obedient faith* - must be present or else the evidence will simply be rejected. This is why the writer of the book Hebrews states, "*Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him*" [Hebrews 11:6].

Thus, no matter what evidence is presented for the existence of God, it is always possible for the unbeliever to counter with some objection or with another question. No argument or combination of arguments can ever convince someone who does not want to submit to God. Even if he is completely overpowered and silenced by the arguments, he will still be of an *unbelieving heart*, and this is what really counts, "*A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.*"

Nevertheless, the evidence is *there*! For a person who sincerely desires the truth and is *willing* to believe, there is an abundance of proof concerning the fact of God - *and* - the *character* of God. The evidence is such as either to completely satisfy an open mind and heart or else to irrevocably condemn an unbelieving heart. For the latter, the only acceptable evidence may prove to be the heavy hand of God's chastening judgments, and even this may only harden the unbeliever's heart yet more.

Of course, in a way, the evidence for the deity of Jesus Christ, as already discussed, constitute an evidence for God, that is, if Christ is God, then God exists! On the other hand, an atheist might maintain that all the miraculous aspects of the person of Christ can be explained in other ways - that is, that the virgin birth was merely a fabrication, the healings were psychosomatic, the fulfilled prophecies were accidental, the resurrection was a plot, etc.

Perhaps all were real supernatural occurrences which we, not knowing much about psychic and occult phenomena, do not yet know how to explain scientifically, but which somehow do have a logical explanation without God. There are many such dodges... unreasonable or impossible...and may seem to be terms of all logical criteria.

Therefore, it is important to show, independently of the witness of Christ, the existence of strong reasons for believing in God - indeed, for believing in the God of the Bible. These reasons, as treated by theologians and philosophers, often take the form of intricate philosophical discourses requiring training in the specialized concepts and vocabulary in order to be comprehensible.

Sometimes these reasons are stated as the argument from:

*Teleology* - The study of goals or ends, and the argument is to the effect that the evidence of order and design in nature indicates purpose and therefore a Designer.

*Cosmology* - The study of the cosmos and its processes, and this argument proceeds especially on the idea that the existence of motion implies ultimately a Prime Mover.

*Ontology* - The study of being. The ontological argument suggests that the existence of the idea of God can only be explained if God really exists.

*Aesthetics* - The study of beauty and truth. Since there are standards in the world of *relative* beauty and truth, there must be somewhere an absolute standard to which all things must ultimately be compared.

*Volition* - The study of volition concludes that an infinite Will must exist if man experiences a multitude of individual, often clashing, wills.

*Morality* - An awareness of moral actions and the relative "*rightness*" or "*wrongness*" of those actions, can only be explained if somewhere there exists an absolute standard and arbiter of moral actions.

Philosophical objections can be raised to each of these standard arguments for God, nevertheless, when the phenomena which they explain in terms of God are tested in terms of other philosophical systems (atheism, pantheism, etc.) on a comparative basis with true theism, the argument of a God emerges in far better light than these philosophical objections. Though these arguments do not *prove* God, they do provide strong evidence when considered as a whole and when compared with other systems.

### **THE EVIDENCE FROM CAUSATION**

For one who desires to believe in God, or who, even though skeptical, is genuinely open and willing to believe, the evidence is full and satisfying. All such arguments as those above involve in one way or another the causal argument - that is, that only God is an adequate Cause for the world as we observe and experience it.

Both scientist and those skilled in logic work and think continually in terms of cause-and-effect relationships. *Nothing happens in and of itself alone*, but, rather is invariably the effect of one or more proximate causes. In science, causality is always a basic assumption. In fact, this assumption is so obviously true to all observation and experience that it is called the "**Law of Cause and Effect**." Every observed phenomenon is an effect, and its cause must be adequate to produce it. No effect can be quantitatively greater or qualitatively extrinsic to its cause. Every effect must be assimilated in principle to its cause. The scientists may not always be capable of clarifying this connection, but it must be there, somewhere. From nothing, nothing comes!

This is basically what science is. The scientist seeks to relate each given phenomenon to the combination of factors or causes which produce it, and then to describe this relationship if possible in quantitative terms, or at least in functional form. That is, he tries to state that a particular process or situation is a "*function*" of one of several "*variables*" which effect its behavior. He tries always to assimilate the effect to its cause, never doubting that the cause-and-effect relationship is logically and rigorously applicable.

Each effect therefore has a cause adequate to produce it. But that cause must itself have been an effect caused by an antecedent cause, and that by another cause, and so on back.

Logic compels us ultimately to one of two conclusions: either the chain of causes is infinite, with no beginning of the sequence at all, or else we must finally see the chain terminate in a great First Cause which itself was eternally un-caused, capable in and of itself to initiate the entire succession of secondary causes and effects. These are the only two possibilities if the Law of Cause and Effect operated in past ages as it does today.

The vastness of the physical universe is inconceivably great, and its Cause must be at least co-extensive with space and coterminous with time. Therefore, the First Cause is *infinite* and *eternal*. Indeed, as the ontological argument would suggest, the existence of the very *ideas* of infinity and eternity, two absolutes [nothing can be more vast than infinity or longer in duration than eternity], is evidence enough that such absolutes have real existence.

Everywhere and always in space and time occur phenomena of energy and matter and motion. To cause and maintain such an infinite array and variety of power-producing system [that is, the galaxies] and power-converting processes [that is, all of the earth's phenomena], the First Cause must be *omnipotent* and *omnipresent*. The fact that all such systems and processes are orderly and capable of systematic and intelligent description and mathematical formulation clearly bespeaks intelligent design. Causality, therefore, in this case indicates the First Cause to be intelligent - indeed *omniscient*.

### ***Personality of the universe***

Another obvious and significant effect in the universe is that of personality, at least on the earth. True, some *materialists* state that such phenomena are purely physico-chemical reactions, the very fact they *think* such thoughts demonstrates consciousness - which, certainly, very few could really believe is only a chemical process. At least we know what we mean when we use such terms as "*think*," "*feel*," "*desire*," "*decide*," etc. These entities have meaning and therefore have some kind of reality. They do not exist independently and thus did not cause themselves. Therefore, thought, feeling, desire, will - all these and numerous similar phenomena are effects,

and must have an adequate cause! Consequently, the First Cause is *conscious, emotional, and volitional* - in short is *personal*.

In like manner, the existence of moral and spiritual realities in the universe proves the First Cause to be essentially *moral* and *spiritual*. The existence of evil in the universe needs further consideration later, but at least the universal recognition that, by definition "*right*" is better than "*wrong*," in itself, proves the First Cause to be intrinsically *righteous*. Similarly, the universal consciousness that "*love*" is better than "*hate*," and that "*justice*" is better than "*injustice*," shows that the First Cause is *just* and *loving*.

The material discussed can perhaps be summarized in some such tabulation as below:

The First Cause of limitless Space must be infinite in extent.  
 The First Cause of endless Time must be eternal in duration.  
 The First Cause of perpetual Motion must be omnipotent in power.  
 The First Cause of unbounded Variety must be omnipresent in phenomena.  
 The First Cause of infinite Complexity must be omniscient in intelligence.  
 The First Cause of Consciousness must be personal.  
 The First Cause of Feeling must be emotional.  
 The First Cause of Will must be volitional.  
 The First Cause of Ethical values must be moral.  
 The First Cause of Religious values must be spiritual.  
 The First Cause of Beauty values must be aesthetic.  
 The First Cause of Righteousness must be holy.  
 The First Cause of Justice must be just.  
 The First Cause of Love must be loving.  
 The First Cause of Life must be living.

Thus, reasoning from cause-and-effect leads us to conclude that the great First Cause of all things, the Prime Mover, is an **infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, personal, emotional, volitional, moral, spiritual, aesthetic, holy, just, loving, living Being**. And this, of course, is nothing less than a character description of the God of the Bible!

### *The Witness of Creation*

Since God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, it is reasonable to expect to find built into the structure of the creation a clear testimony of His character. "*The heavens declare the glory of God and the skies proclaim the work of His hands*" [Psalm 19:1].

This, in fact, is the explicit claim of a remarkable and powerful verse of Scripture. "*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - His eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse*" [Romans 1:20].

The fact of God...["*His eternal power*"]...and the nature of God...["*and Godhead*"]... are, according to this striking verse, "*clearly seen*" in the creation.

As a matter of fact, these two aspects of God are indeed set forth with amazing clarity in the basic structure of nature. The fundamental laws which control all natural processes clearly

point to an omnipotent God and a primeval creation. Also, the basic framework within which all processes are structured likewise points directly to the nature of God.

But how can "be clearly seen in *invisible qualities*" be clearly seen? Such a statement seems contradictory, however, we have already noted how the invisible God is manifest visibly in the Son. "*No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made Him, known*" [John 1:18].

In the same way the "*invisible things of Him*" are seen in "*the things that are made.*" First, His "*eternal power*" is witnessed by the laws He created to govern His universe; and second, His "*Godhead*" is reflected by the structure of the creation.

The two basic laws of nature, as recognized intuitively through the ages and formalized scientifically in the past hundred years, are laws of universal **conservation** and universal **decay**. The law of conservation [**First Law of Thermodynamics**] is a law of quantitative constancy; nothing is now being created or destroyed. The law of increasing entropy [**Second Law of Thermodynamics**] is a law of qualitative decay; everything is tending toward disorder and death. The sun is a tremendous source of power, but its energy is gradually being dispersed through space, and the same is true for other suns. Eventually the universe seems destined to die a "*heat death*," all of its power uniformly scattered as low-level heat throughout the universe. The energy will all still be there, but no longer available to keep things going and the universe will die.

Now, since the universe has not yet died, it must not be infinitely old, and therefore it must have had a beginning. As time goes on, and available power decreases [*by the Second Law*] even though the total power in the universe remains constant [*by the First Law*]. Therefore the source of the tremendous power manifest throughout the universe must be outside and above the universe. It cannot be temporal power: it must be **eternal** power. The universe had a beginning, brought about by a great First Cause...a Prime Mover...an omnipotent God! The basic laws of the universe thus witness with great power of the fact of God.

In similar manner the structure of the universe witnesses to the nature of God, or better, to the "*structure*" of God, the Godhead. The Universe is...[both as all men sense intuitively and as modern science has described dimensionally]...a remarkable tri-universe a "*continuum*" of Space and Mass-Energy and Time. Similarly, although the word "**God-head**" does not itself mean the divine Trinity, it does have reference to the nature or "*Godhead*" of God, the form in which God exists as God. since Scripture does clearly reveal God to be a tri-une God, theologians through the centuries have naturally interpreted the term to include the concept of His tri-unity - God as Father, Son and Holy spirit, one God in three persons.

As has been stated, "*Space is the invisible, omnipresent background of all things, everywhere displaying phenomena of Matter and/or Energy (which are inter-convertible) which are, in turn, experienced in Time.*" Just so, the Father is the invisible, omnipresent source of all being, manifest and declared by the eternal Word, the son, who is, in turn, experienced in the Spirit.

*The tri-universe is remarkable analogous to the nature of its Creator.*

It is not that the universe is a *triad* of three distinct entities which, when added together, comprise the whole. Rather each of the three is itself the whole, and the universe is a true trinity, not a triad. Space is infinite and time is endless, and everywhere throughout space and time events happen, processes function, phenomena exist.

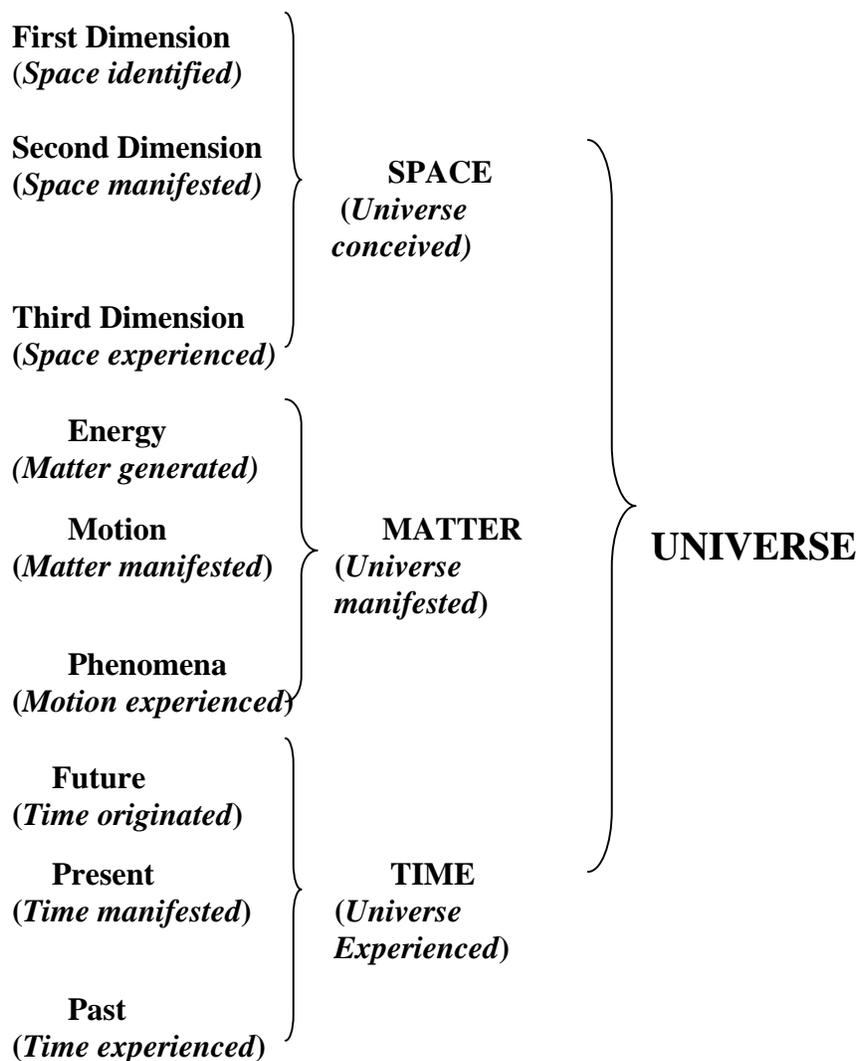
Furthermore, each of the three entities is also itself a trinity. That is, for example, Space is comprised of three dimensions, each of which occupies all space. The first dimension is the basic dimension by which Space is identified (e.g., the linear dimension); it can only be "*seen*," however, in two dimensions and "*experienced*" in three dimensions.

Time also is a trinity. The future is the unseen, "*unexperienced*" source of Time. As it "*flows*" forward, Time becomes apparent to the senses, instant by instant, in the present. In the past, it has become "*experienced*" or historical time.

And everywhere in Space and Time things happen. The particular event of "*happening*" is evidenced to the senses as a motion, a space-time ratio. The particular type and rate of motion (or "*velocity*," the space traversed divided by the corresponding increment of time) determines the particular "*phenomenon*" the is experienced, whether light, or sound, or weight, or inertia, or some other quantity. The motion, however, did not generate itself; rather it is caused by intangible, unseen Energy. Here again is a tri-unity. Energy, occurring everywhere in Space and Time, continually generates Motion, which is experienced as a Phenomenon. For example, sound energy generates sound waves. which are experienced as the hearing of sound. Light energy begets light rays which are experienced in the seeing. Gravitational energy produces the acceleration of gravity which is experienced in the falling, or in the weighing. And so on.

Thus the entire physical creation is a marvelous trinity of trinities, clearly reflecting "*even His Godhead*." The laws by which all processes function bear witness to the fact of God and the framework within which they function reflects the tri-une nature of God.

These remarkable relationship can be visualized by means of the diagram on the following page:



**The Divine-Human Nature of Christ**

We have shown the rational necessity of a personal God who created all things in the beginning. We have also considered the logical and scientific evidence that God is a tri-une God, one God in essence but existing in three persons, Father, Son and Spirit.

It has also been shown that the second person of the Godhead is the one who manifests God to man and to all His creation. Whenever and wherever God has been made visible or in any way manifested locally and temporally in His creation, it is the second person, the Word of God, who has so appeared.

His ultimate manifestation, in fact His permanent and final such manifestation, is as man Himself. God became incarnate as man in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. After His sacrificial death and resurrection, He is forever the "man in the glory" at the right hand of the Father.

This "*hypostasis union*" of God and man in Jesus Christ is no doubt difficult, if not impossible, for man to comprehend intellectually. A rational description of how it is possible for the *infinite* and *eternal* God to be indissolubly...[*that is incapable of being dissolved; perpetually binding or obligatory*]... *incarnate* in finite and temporal man is quite elusive and many people have considered such a union to be impossible. The gnostic philosophers... [whose influence in the apostolic period was so devastating to Christian truth]...accepted the divinity of Christ but rejected His humanity. Most moderns, on the other hand, accept His humanity but reject His deity.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, there are many compelling evidences that prove beyond all reasonable doubt that Jesus Christ was both perfect man and "*very God of very God.*" However difficult such a union may be for man to comprehend scientifically, there is no other way to explain the actual facts associated with Christ's life and testimony. In any case, it is instructive to note that the same type of paradox associated with the divine-human nature of Christ is also found impressed upon every aspect of the universe He created.

Consider the space-mass-time universe, which has already been shown to consist of a trinity of trinities, reflecting the trinitarian nature of God. In addition, each of the three entities exhibits a paradoxical complementarily very much analogous to that of the hypostatic union in Christ. For example '*space*' is infinite and yet is comprehended and measured only in terms of finite regions of space. Similarly "*time*" is eternal and yet is comprehended and measured only in terms of bounded increments of time. Although it sounds contradictory in a formal sense, it is nevertheless realistically true that "*space*" is both finite and infinite and that "*time*" is both temporal and eternal. As a matter of fact, these are the very terms with which we describe the divine-human nature of Christ. In His humanity, He is finite and temporal, confined to a given space at a given time. In His deity, on the other hand, He is infinite and eternal without "*beginning of days nor end of life*" [Hebrews 7:3, the one "*that filleth all in all*" [Ephesians 1:23].

In the same manner there is a remarkable duality, or complementarily, of "*mass - energy.*" It is well known that "*mass*" and "*energy*" are in principle inter-convertible, through nuclear fission or fusion reactions.

The Einstein equation,  $E = Mc^2$ , relates energy and mass to each other, by the constant "c", which is the velocity of light. The motion of light is thus the foundation of the whole complex of phenomena which occur in the space - time universe. The velocity of light is the ultimate motion in the physical universe, so far as we know, the velocity to which all lesser velocities must be referenced.

We can, therefore, speak of the universe as a "*space-light-time*" universe. Now it is significant that this motion of light is famous for its mysterious and paradoxical complementary. That is, the translation of light, moving at its immense velocity (186,000 miles per second), seems to take place both as a stream of particles and as a field of waves. It would seem that light could not be both waves and particles, and yet it definitely behaves as a wave motion under some conditions and as a particle motion under others. This duality applies both in radiations of electro-magnetic energy and in the atomic structure of matter, in which the orbiting electron likewise behaves both as a particle and as a wave. The two disciplines of modern physics known as *quantum mechanics* and *wave mechanics* have been developed from these two concepts.

This paradox has never been resolved in a manner satisfying to all physicists, but in any case is considered to be innately realistic. It has been developed, in fact, by Heisenberg into the famous "*uncertainty principle*" and by Born into his "*complementarily principle*." It has even been considered by such physicists as analogous to the paradox between determinism and free will in the moral realm.

One would say, therefore, that all physical reality has a dual nature, that the ultimate reconciliation of these apparent contradictory natures is involved in an intrinsic "*uncertainty*," but that they likewise exist in perfect "*complementarily*." But exactly the same statement can be made about the divine-human nature of Christ. Though it seems paradoxical, it is nevertheless harmonious in every respect with the nature of the world in which we live.

### **Reason Forsaken**

We have seen that logical and rational analysis of the world which God created leads directly **to the necessary existence of the Christian God**. The witness of the universe around us...[according to Psalm 19:1]...**and** of our own hearts within us...[as stated in Romans 2:14-15]...provides clear evidence of the truth of God. Even the vast mysteries of God's tri-une nature and of the divine-human nature of Christ are so modeled in the structure of all physical reality that unbelievers are "*without excuse*" [Romans 1:20; Psalm 14:1].

How, then, do skeptics justify themselves in rejecting the evidence of God? Basically, they fall back on one or both of two escapist techniques.

1. The first is to raise objections to the doctrine of God because evil exists in the world, maintaining that if God exists and is really omnipotent and all-holy, He would never have permitted evil and suffering to enter the world.
2. The second is to deny the validity of the reasoning process, especially when applied to the determination of ultimate causes.

The problem of evil is a very real problem and will be considered at some later time in this series of lessons. In itself, however, it fails altogether to deal with the *positive* evidence for God as outlines in this lesson. The argument from causation is still intact, whether or not we can adequately explain how a First Cause that is holy permits unholiness.

The argument from irrationality is more difficult to answer, however, since its very premise denies even the existence of an answer. Those who use this argument reject the possibility of meaningful reasoning from the finite to the infinite, insisting that other unknown factors may exist which would upset the apparent causal relationships.

For example, the argument based on the laws of thermodynamics is sidestepped by postulating either: (a) a "*steady-state*" cosmology, in which continual evolution of matter out of nothing is supposedly taking place in some unknown region in space to offset the continual decay of energy which is observed everywhere in the known universe; or (b) an "*oscillating-universe*" cosmology, in which the present reign of decay in the universe is supposedly offset by alternate cycles of growth, during which all things are somehow re-energized. Neither of these theories is capable of proof, since the postulated rewinding of the universe takes place outside of those regions of space and time which can be experimentally observed. Such theories are at best, therefore, speculative suppositions. The Second Law, on the other hand, has been experimentally observed to be true wherever and whenever it can be tested, without exception. The Second Law is *science*; the theories which attempt to circumvent it are strictly *fictions*, conceivable perhaps, but never observed in real life.

Similarly, the law of cause and effect is science; speculations which deny its applicability in relation to first causes are based on wishful thinking, not on present experience. The faith of atheism and pantheism is based on an irrational denial of uniformity in nature, despite its professed allegiance to experimental science.

This strange irrationality in scientific philosophy may well be a contributing factor to the headlong flight from reason characterizing modern existentialism and its various offshoots. That is, scientists profess to have eliminated the need for God and yet to have no real explanation apart from God. It makes no sense that unfeeling, unthinking, dead matter could produce feeling, thinking, living beings, and yet that is what people are expected to believe. It is not too surprising that more and more people, especially young people, have concluded there is no rationality to anything. To such as these, the present moment of existence is all that has meaning and it is futile even to speculate about eternity or purpose or truth or any other ultimate.

Science, they think, has long since expelled God from any meaningful place in human life, and yet science is not itself a substitute for God, since it has led only to an imminent threat of nuclear extinction, to global pollution and to a wide variety of other socio-technologic perils. And so the cult of irrationalism and escapism grows, expressing itself in the amoral and a-mental productions of modern music, drama, literature and art.

This is the dead end to which man's denial of the overwhelming evidence of God has led. True reason and true science will lead to God, but man does not want to submit to God and therefore he denies the evidence of his own reason. "*They became vain in their reasoning, and - professing themselves to be wise, they became fools*" [Romans 1:22-23]. God said in Jeremiah 2:13, "*They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*"

## Another God

The cult of irrationality, manifest on different levels in the philosophy of existentialism...[*the belief that man has absolute freedom of choice, that there are no rational criteria serving as a basis for choice*]...the theology of neo-orthodoxy...[*The belief that the Bible is not absolute truth - also called "Higher Criticism"*]...and the tactics of destructivism and anarchy, only lead to chaos. Theoretical irrationalism in science and philosophy has naturally led to political and sociological confusion as well, for great numbers of people.

Men cannot long be satisfied with chaos, however. Each person is so conditioned by all his observation and experience to think in terms of causation and purpose that he must, even despite himself, look for some kind of ultimate order and meaning in the universe. If he has lost faith in the true God, and His Word, then he must sooner or later find another god.

Thus, the same tragic sequence is being repeated today that in varied ways has occurred often before. A solid and satisfying Biblical theism declines to a compromising religious liberalism, then to confusion and anarchy, then onward to polytheistic pantheism and ultimate to Satanism. It is no surprise that existential theology and philosophy produced the "drop-out" generation culture, leading not only to riot and revolution, but also to occultism and eventually into the worship of Satan himself.

Behind the scenes, no doubt, these movements are being manipulated by certain sinister forces both human and demonic, who, unlike those they manipulate, are not at all confused about their aims and purposes. They promote atheism and irrationalism in order to persuade men to overthrow all prior institutions, remnant from the divine economy, and then to submit to a universal humanistic and pantheistic totalitarian government. More and more this final species of pantheism will be united with Satanism, and man will consciously align himself with Satan in his climactic effort to destroy God.

Man's innate spiritual and rational nature will impel him to believe and follow some god. If he will not believe the true God, he will inevitably follow the false god. "*Because they received not the love the truth, that they might be saved...God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie*" [2 Thessalonians 2:10-11]. "*Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.*" [Romans 1:28]. "*And they worshipped the dragon*" [Revelation 13:4].

Satan, together with the end-time leaders of his human conspiracy (called in the book of Revelation the "*beast*" and the "*false prophet*") and with his angelic and human followers [Revelation 16:12-14], will finally prepare for one grand and mighty assault on the throne of God. But the outcome is never in doubt: "*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: For He is Lord of lords and Kings of kings*" [Revelation 17:14].